

claims. Claims 14, 18, 20-23, 28 and 30-32 have been amended. New Claims 33-38 have been added. Claims 1, 7, 10, 14, 28, 33 and 36 are the independent claims.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5, 7-8, 10-18, 20-24 and 26-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable in view of U.S. Patent 5,247,330 (Ohyama) in view of U.S. Patent 5,631,699 (Saito) in view of U.S. Patent 5,940,128 (Morimura) and U.S. Patent 4,939,580 (Ishikawa). Claims 6, 9, 19 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Ohyama, Saito, Morimura, Ishikawa* and further in view of European Patent EP 617562 (Mizoguchi).

Claim 1 is directed to an image input device that picks up images of one or more subjects by switching an image pickup direction. The device includes an image pickup unit that picks up an image of a subject and outputs an image signal corresponding to the picked-up image. An image pickup direction switch switches the image pickup direction of the image pickup unit. A first detection unit detects an angle of the image pickup direction and determines whether the detected angle is equal to a predetermined angle. A storage unit stores an image signal of the one or more subjects only

when the predetermined angle is detected by the first detection unit.

Claim 10 is a corresponding method claim.

*Ohyama* relates to an input image device that includes an original pedestal that holds an original to be imaged, a camera unit takes an image of the original, a camera supporting unit supports the camera unit at a particular position relative to the pedestal, a light source illuminates the original and a light source supporting unit supports the light source. An image input device uses a single light source both as a reflection illumination light source and as a transmission illumination light source, which enables the device to be cost effective and have good handling performance. It is possible to rotate the camera unit in the direction indicated by a first arrow and a button is operated to rotate the upper frame in a second direction by a second arrow. This sets the camera to a close-up position. Applicant submits that *Ohyama* does not teach or suggest a first detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction and determines whether the detected angle is equal to a predetermined angle, as recited in Applicant's Claim 1.

Saito relates to a video camera system for recording an image of an object. The video camera system includes a video camera body, a supporting base, a coupling member, and a controller, which sets functions of the video camera, such as the exposure level, the focusing point, adjustment mode and the angle of view. Applicant submits that Saito does not teach or suggest a first detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction and determines whether the detected angle is equal to a predetermined angle, as recited in Applicant's Claim 1.

Morimura relates to an input image device that inputs and original into an external device as an image signal. The image input device is arranged to pick-up an image of the original and output an image signal corresponding to the original. The device also detects the state of the original relative to an image plain formed by picking up the image, by using the output image signal and controlling an image pick-up operation in accordance with the detected state of the original relative to the image plain.

Morimura also discloses a frame memory (5) that extracts information on an external border of an original. The extracted information on the external border is subjected to

a Hough transformation by a Hough transformation circuit. An inclination angle of the original is calculated. Applicant submits that calculating an inclination angle of an original does not teach or suggest a first detection unit that detects an angle of an image pickup direction and determines whether the detected angle is equal to a predetermined angle, as recited in Applicant's Claim 1.

*Ishikawa* relates to a picture reading apparatus that includes a camera that converts a picture to be read to an electronic signal. A supporting member supports the camera and a voice input unit. A control device serves to minimize the output from the voice input unit during movement of the supporting member. While a mechanism for moving the camera is in operation, the output from the voice input unit is minimized to suppress the output operational noise. Video is inhibited during camera movement. Applicant submits that inhibiting video output does not teach or suggest a first detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction and determines whether the detected angle is equal to a predetermined angle, as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 1 and 10 are patentable over the combination of the above-discussed art.

Claim 7 is directed to an image input device for picking up images of a plurality of subjects by switching an image pickup direction. The image input device include a mount table for laying a subject and an image pickup unit adapted to pick up an image of the subject and outputs an image signal corresponding to the picked-up image. An image pickup direction switching unit switches the image pickup direction of the image pickup unit between a direction for picking up an image of the subject laid on the mount table and another direction. A detection unit detects the image pickup direction of the image pickup unit. A storage unit stores the image signal output from the image pickup unit only when the image pickup direction of the image pickup unit detected by the detecting unit is the direction for picking up the subject on the mount table.

Applicant submits that neither Ohyama, Saito, Morimura nor Ishikawa, discussed above, teach or suggest a detection unit that detects an image pickup direction of an image pickup unit, or a storage unit that stores the image

signal output from the image pickup unit only when an image pickup direction of the image pickup unit detected by the detecting unit is a direction for picking up the subject on a mount table, as recited in Applicant's Claim 7. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 7 is allowable.

Claim 14 is directed to an image input device for picking up images of one subject or more by switching an image pickup direction. The image input device includes an image pickup unit that picks up an image of a subject and outputs an image signal corresponding to the picked-up image. An image pickup direction switch switches the image pickup direction of the image pickup unit. A first detection unit detects an angle of the image pickup direction. A storage unit stores the image signal of one subject or more picked up by the image pickup unit in accordance with a result that a predetermined angle is detected by the first detection unit. An inhibiting unit inhibits the image signal of one subject or more picked up by the image pick up unit from being stored when an angle detected by the first detection unit is different from the predetermined angle.

Claim 28 is a similar method claim.

Applicant submits that neither *Ohyama, Saito, Morimura* nor *Ishikawa*, discussed above, teach or suggest a first detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction, or a storage unit that stores the image signal of one subject or more picked up by the image pickup unit in accordance with a result that a predetermined angle is detected by the first detection unit, or an inhibiting unit inhibits the image signal of one subject or more picked up by the image pick up unit from being stored when an angle detected by the first detection unit is different from the predetermined angle, as recited in Applicant's Claim 14. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 14 and 28 are allowable.

Claim 33 is directed to an image input device that picks up an image of an object by changing an image pickup direction, the image input device includes a detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction. A control unit changes a white balance mode in accordance with a result of the detection unit. Claim 38 is a corresponding method claim.

Applicant submits that neither *Ohyama, Saito, Morimura* nor *Ishikawa*, discussed above, teach or suggest a

detection unit that detects an angle of the image pickup direction or a control unit that changes a white balance mode in accordance with a result of the detection unit, as recited in Applicant's Claim 33. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 33 and 38 are allowable.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against any of the independent claims herein. The independent claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

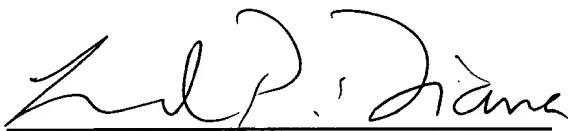
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration, or reconsideration as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.



Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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